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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6831
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RUALSFJ/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 2759
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 5190
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 1781
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 3518
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 6380
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 8583
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1827
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4647
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 5592
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS TOKYO 003920

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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - PRESIDENT BUSH'S 8/22
SPEECH ON IRAQ

LEAD STORIES: Most papers gave top play to the finding on Thursday by investigators that a loose bolt caused a fuel leak in the China Airlines jetliner that burst into flames at Naha Airport on Monday.

1. "President Bush Equates Prewar Japan with Al-Qaeda"
The liberal Asahi's Washington correspondent Yoshiyuki Komurata wrote (8/24): "Although President Bush praised Japan's successful postwar democratization to justify his Iraq policy during his remarks at the national convention of Veterans of Foreign Wars, which was held in Kansas City, Missouri, on August 22, he demonstrated his poor understanding of history by likening prewar Japan to Al-Qaeda.... The president completely ignored the historical fact that there was popular suffrage in Japan during the Taisho era (1912-1925) and based his argument on the premise that there was no democracy in prewar Japan, saying, 'The Japanese themselves didn't think the country would democratize.'... The president also lumped together WWII with the Korean War and the Vietnam War and stressed that the US can achieve victory in the Middle East 'like it did in Asia.' US media outlets criticized the analogy, noting that Japan and South Korea are, unlike Iraq, homogenous countries and arguing that the president has drawn an incorrect lesson from history... President Bush's legacy hangs on the war on terrorism, but in this speech, he displayed his ignorance of the history and culture of foreign nations, including Japan. He ignored inconvenient facts and trumpeted America's 'ideals' and 'goodwill' in a message intended for domestic consumption."

